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Pieces of pearl displayed at the emporium marketable in Hong Kong

SALES of 212 pearl lots earned K941,000,286 in the second-day emporium session, which continued at the Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

A member of the pearl sale work committee said: "Lots of pearls have been sold in Myanmar kyat for 37 times among similar sales in euro and Myanmar kyat at home and abroad for 131 times. This emporium will divide three tenders for sales of 317 lots of pearl. Lots for tender No. 1 will be sold at noon and tender No. 2 at 4:30 pm today. At tomorrow noon, pearl lots for tender No. 3 will be sold."

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi and Deputy Minister U Min Min Oo inspected tenders' submission, closure of tenders and opening of tenders for scrutiny and sales of pearl lots.

"I saw pieces of pearl displayed at the emporium are common use at the domestic market. Export quality pieces of pearl are better than that of



Sales of pearl and gems lots in Myanmar kyat for April 2021 will last ten days from 1 to 10 April. During the period, the emporium will sell 317 lots of pearl, 2,148 lots of jade, and 199 lots of gems to local gem merchants through open tenders.

today's displayed. But, current pieces of pearl are appropriate for the domestic market. As stocks are set at fair prices, buyers are expected to obtain benefit. I think if I sell out this pearl, I will get profit," said a gem merchant who viewed

round displays of pearl and gems.

He added, "As the number of gem merchants at this emporium is lesser than those of previous ones. But I prefer to avoid crowds of merchants at the emporium. We all are con-

venient in transport because officials of the emporium have arranged safety for all. The pieces of pearl displayed at this emporium are marketable in Hong Kong."

Sales of pearl and gems lots in Myanmar kyat for April

2021 will last ten days from 1 to 10 April. During the period, the emporium will sell 317 lots of pearl, 2,148 lots of jade, and 199 lots of gems to local gem merchants through open tenders. — Naing Lin/GNLM

MR to operate running of 7-up, 8-down trains from 4 to 11 April

MYANMA Railways under the Ministry of Transport and Communications arranges the running of 7-up and 8-down trains along the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw railway section for smooth transport of passengers.

During the period from 4 to 11 April, 7-up and 8-down trains will be operated alternatively. On 4, 7 and 10 April, the 7-up train will leave Yangon Railway Station at 8 am and arrive at Nay Pyi Taw station at 8 pm.

On 5, 8 and 11 April, the 8-down train will leave Nay Pyi Taw station at 6 am and arrive at Yangon station at 6 pm. Running of trains will be suspended on 6 and 9 April.

Along the route, the trains will

stopover at railway stations in Togyaukalay, Bago, DaikU, Nyaunglaybin, Kyaukdaga, Kanyutkwin, Pyu, Tougoo, Yedashe, Yeni, Ela and Pyinmana. — MNA

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Farmers from Kyaukse grow okra for extra family income

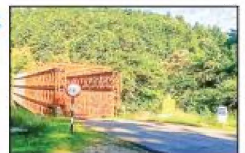
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Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) Building of a Union based on democracy and federalism in practising genuine disciplined multiparty democracy in a full fairness manner
- (B) Emphasizing of restoration of eternal peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
- (c) Continuous practising of the "principle" of peaceful co-existence among countries by holding up the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy

2. Economic affairs

- (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other

sectors of the economy as well

- (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
- (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State

3. Social affairs

- (a) For ensuring of dynamism of Union spirit which is genuine patriotic spirit
- (b) Following customs and traditions of all ethnic nationalities and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national characters
- (c) Enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Five future programmes of State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.
3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.
4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.
5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason for human rights, some persons are now under pressured, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnish the image of democracy.
2. For preventing destructive actions against stability of the state, safety of the public and the rule of law, it is also required to proper actions in line with the law.
3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of the country and people.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council

Order No 109/2021

6th Waning of Tabaung 1382 ME
2 April 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Members of Mandalay City Development Committee

The following persons are appointed by the State Administration Council as members of the Mandalay City Development Committee, according to Section 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

1. U Myint Oo
2. U Nay Lin Tun

By Order,

Sd/ Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Military hospitals continue providing healthcare to civilians

MILITARY hospitals in the townships of regions and states keep providing medical treatments to the people to solve their healthcare services difficulties.

A total of 1,012, 625 outpatients and 4,101 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts,

medics and nurses have conducted 5,282 major operations and 2,775 minor operations. The senior doctors treat serious cases.

These hospitals managed for the birth of 7,074 babies while bringing 7,074 pregnant women to the respective military hospitals. Of those 2,798

cases are done in caesarean section and 4,276 cases in ordinary delivery.

Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients with foods, and medical workers were provided with cash assistance.

—MNA



Southern Command Commander Major-General Myo Win is providing foodstuffs to local patients at the military hospital.

The elected governments need actually to serve their tasks in a correct way of democracy

DEMOCRACY is based on the wish of the majority, but such a wish must be authentic with honest politics. If the majority's wish is not honest, it is difficult to identify such politics is of democracy. The elected governments need actually to serve their tasks in a correct way of democracy.

(Excerpt from the speech to officers, other ranks and their families in Myeik, Kyunsu and Cocogyun stations made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 21 March 2021)

Announcement

THE Ministry of Information does not officially approve an FM radio line with spreading news to be broadcast on test in Yangon Region. If anyone joins the operation of such broadcasting and gives assistance without permission, action will be taken against them under the existing law.

Ministry of Information

National-level committee meeting on resettlement, closure of IDP camps held

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement held the first coordination meeting of the National-Level Committee on Resettlement and Closure of IDP Camps (1/2021) yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the National-Level Committee, discussed policy and procedures to be implemented by the committee, formation of regional level committees and working committees, continued programmes to protect



Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung chairs the coordination meeting (1/2021) of the National-level Committee on Resettlement and Closure of IDP Camps yesterday.

and provide to the internally displaced persons in respect- ed areas and cooperation in rebuilding a safe and dignified environment for the displaced persons.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine discussed the support for the resettlement of IDPs and the closure of IDP camps as well as the social security support to the currently displaced persons in refugee camps.

Members of the committees and concerned officials briefed on the situation in their respective sectors and the process to be implemented. Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and Union Minister Dr Thet Thet Khine coordinated the meeting.—MNA

Coordination meeting on development projects supported by European Union held

UTHAN AUNG KYAW, Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations presided over a coordination meeting with the respective ministries and organizations on the development projects being implemented with the assistance of the European Union.

The meeting was held at the office of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, and the senior officials from respective ministries and organizations reported on the recent progress of each project and the status of project implementation constraints as well as the matter need to be negotiated with the European Union. Afterwards, the Deputy Minister

underscored on the importance of information exchange and urged to update over the implementation constraints to the respective development partners including to explore possible options for the national priority projects. He also added that the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations would facilitate for the matters that need to be consulted between the relevant ministries and development partners. The totally 25 representatives from the relevant ministries and organizations participated in the meeting. The Coordination Meeting on the projects funded by French (AFD) and the Federal Republic of Germany was also held on 31 March 2021.—MNA



The MIFER deputy minister presides over the coordination meeting on development projects aided by the EU.

Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo calls for efforts to improve services after issuing permits for investors

UNION MINISTER for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission U Aung Naing Oo met with the Chairman and members of the Yangon Region Investment Committee, the officials of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) at the Yangon Region Branch Office of DICA in the afternoon of 2nd April 2021.

At the meeting, Union Min-

ister said that the Region and State Investment Committees including the Yangon Region Investment Committee were reorganized in accordance with the Myanmar Investment Law. He also noted that Yangon Region is one of the most invested regions, and efforts must be made to improve aftercare services for existing investors.

He highlighted that the barriers for investors must

be examined and resolved in line with the law. The Union Minister also said that the role of the One Stop Service (OSS) in the Yangon Region Office is very important and should be emphasized for smooth operation. He urged the officials to prioritize investment promotion activities based on investment facilitation.

He asked the Yangon Region Investment Committee to supervise the investment ac-

tivities in accordance with the law and to review and submit case delays in issuing permits in the region to the Myanmar Investment Commission.

After that, the Chairman of the Yangon Region Investment Committee, the Chairman of the Yangon Region Administration Council U Hla Soe made his discussion followed by the presentation of U Myo Khaing Oo, the secretary of the Yangon Region Investment Committee

and the director for the Yangon Region Office of DICA.

Afterward, U Thant Sin Lwin, Director-General of DICA gave an over-view of the activities of the department.

The meeting was attended by members of Yangon Region Investment Committee, Deputy Directors-General and Directors from DICA, and the departmental officials from the One Stop Service (OSS).—MNA

SSB pays social security for insured workers

THE Social Security Board (SSB) contributed social welfare fees to private factories' and businesses' employees in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SSB granted a total of K68,715.140 million to 1,593,558 insured employees -- K21,462.512 million to 853,224 workers from 8,620 factories and businesses between 13 May 2020 and 31 March 2021 in the COVID-19 1st wave, K46,597.306 million to 735,350 employees from 7,710 companies between 2 October 2020 and 31 March 2021 in the 2nd wave, K99.807 million (60 per cent of employee healthcare) for 1,364 employees who undergo quarantine between 28 March 2020 and 31 March 2021, and K555.515 million (60 per cent of healthcare) to 3,620 insured workers and expectant mothers between 22 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.—MNA

SSB contribution of social welfare fees to insured workers from private factories and workplaces during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sr	Subject	Permitted		Period
		Numbers	Kyats	
1	First SSB contribution (40%)	853,224	21,462.512	13-5-2020-31-3-2021
2	Second SSB contribution (40%)	735,350	46,597.306	2-10-2020-31-3-2021
3	Healthcare benefits for insured employees who undergo quarantine (60%)	1,364	99.807	28-3-2020-31-3-2021
4	Healthcare benefits for pregnant employees (60%)	3,620	555.515	22-4-2020-31-3-2021
Total		1,593,558	68,715.140	

MoC Deputy Minister meets foreign investors

DEPUTY MINISTER for the Ministry of Commerce U Nyunt Aung, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Working Committee on Ensuring the Seamless Flow of Trade and Goods met foreign investors at the UMFFCCI office yesterday.

During the meeting, the Chinese, Thailand, Korean, Japanese, Taiwan and Hong Kong investors in the industrial zones and representatives of foreign companies presented their current difficulties.

The departmental officials also discussed matters related to the trade, banking, jetty, arrival visa, investment and export and import permits.



The MoC Deputy Minister hold talks with foreign investors on ensuring the seamless flow of trade and goods yesterday.

Then, the committee chairman said there are a total of 42,001 containers -- 19,594 departures and 22,407 arrivals at the jetty between 23 February and 31 March 2021.

Arrangements are also being made normally with the neighbouring countries for border trade. The ministry will cooperate with the relevant ministries to solve the current difficulties.

Then, the officials also discussed difficulties in salary withdrawal for factory workers, salary payment by CMP businesspersons, delays in imports and other hardships in investment and containers.

The officials of the Myanmar Port Authority and Central Bank of Myanmar also settled the issues including overdue payments of containers in the meeting.—MNA

Security measures conducted to ensure community peace

TATMADAW, Police Force and Fire Brigade jointly conducted security measures to ensure the State's stability, security of people, the rule of law and community peace starting 14 February night.

Tatmadaw, police and fire brigade members also jointly conduct security measures for the peaceful night and community peace in respective regions and states and keep serving security measures the whole day.—MNA



Tatmadaw, police and fire brigade members take security measures at night in Nay Pyi Taw.

2019 Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Awards handed to nation's writers

THE 2019 Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Awards, Scholarships and Pakokku U Ohn Pe Library Book Awards giving ceremony was held at the meeting hall of the Printing and Publishing Department (PPD) on Thein-byu Road, Yangon, yesterday morning.

Firstly, PPD Director-General U Win Kyaw Aung and Chairman of Myanmar Writers Association (MWA) U Kyaw Win (Manoktha Kyaw Win), who is also Chairman of the Pakokku Literary Award Fund Manage-

al Kywal). U Win Kyaw Aung handed out 2019 Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Awards, Scholarships and Pakokku U Ohn Pe Library Book Awards to U Ohn Maung (Myinmu Maung Naing Moe), advisor to MoI, fund management committee members Maung Nyein Thu (Gyobingauk), U Myo Tun (Maung Sein Naung-Lewe), U Aung Than Oo (Pathein Aung Than Oo), U Soe Myint (Soe Hmoo), Dr Tin Aung Shwe (Research) and U Myat Soe (Myat Soe Hlaing).



The PPD Director-General addresses on the occasion of the 2019 Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Awards giving ceremony yesterday.



Fund management committee member U Soe Myint gives the 2019 second prize (research genre) to Saya Aung Pan Wai (LLB).



MWA Chair U Kyaw Win (Manoktha Kyaw Win) presents the Pakokku Lifetime Literary Award to Sayama Gyi Daw Kywal Kywal (Ma Kywal Kywal).



Fund management committee member U Myo Tun (Maung Sein Naung-Lewe) awards the third prize (short story genre) to Saya Hmya Wai (Okkan).

ment Committee, respectively delivered opening remarks.

Then, U Kyaw Win conferred the Pakokku Lifetime Literary Award to Sayama Gyi Daw Kywal Kywal (Ma Ky-

Next, Pakokku Lifetime Literary Award winner Sayama Gyi Daw Kywal Kywal (Ma Kywal Kywal) expressed words of thanks on behalf of other award winners.

The officials gave one lifetime literary award, 12 prizes in five categories like a collection of poems, novels, short stories, treatise and research after reviewing 82 artworks, 3 Pakokku

U Ohn Pe Library Book Awards and 2 National University of Arts and Culture's Awards.

The Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award was established in 1992 by U Ohn Pe, who donated

K7.6 million to the country as award funds. Moreover, the ceremony is held yearly, and this time is its 27th literary award ceremony. — MNA

People need to look after children to evade utilization in frontline of riotous protests



As such, international organizations like UNICEF, which takes exceptional care of children, should object and protest the children against exploitation.

MEMBERS of NLD and its extremist followers commit incitements through various ways and means for the people to reach the roads, utilizing children who are immature, innocent in politics in the frontline of riotous protests.

Moreover, regrettable incidents were found that they

incite those children to participate in violent acts holding arms used to cause injuries at many people, mobilizing them with cash assistance and awards and utilizing them in the frontline of riots with abuse of glue smell and use of any stimulant drugs to be free from frightening.

As such, international organizations like UNICEF, which takes exceptional care of children, should object and protest the children against exploitation, and people need to look after their children not to be fallen under political opportunists and not to derail into wrong ways. —MNA



Great Cormorant, Storks, Spoonbills sojourn at summer paddy fields in NyaungU

WHEN the hydro-powered river water pumping projects in NyaungU Township of Mandalay Region distribute water to summer paddy fields, about 500 birds including Great Cormorant, Storks and Spoonbills inhabit there, said farmer U Tin Soe who uses water from Thu Khaung Te river water pumping project.

There are five river water pumping projects in NyaungU and these birds have not lived there for ten years. When the water is supplied to these farmlands, the birds are supportive for the farmers as they eat snails that destroy the paddy and also for the ecosystem, according to U Shwe Htay Aung, warden of Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary.

According to the bird experts, the Storks and Spoonbills are infertile, migratory birds as well as permanent residents,

he added.

The white Spoonbills can be seen in many places of the country including Taninthayi and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine coastal areas except for the northern regions.

The Great Cormorants are the native birds that reproduce between October and January. According to the records, they breed at Sittaung River basin and can be seen in the southern parts of the country. The Storks, Spoonbills and white Spoonbills live in Pakokku Township in the third weeks of February and hundreds of birds live in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary areas. They migrate to summer paddy fields when the water from Thu Khaung Te, Kyauk Kuu, Ngathayouk and Lawkananda river water pumping projects is distributed to the paddy fields.—Ko Htein, KPD/GNLM

Announcement of Union Election Commission

31 March 2021

1. Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Chanayethazan and Kyaukse townships of Mandalay Region and Padaung Township of Bago Region.
2. Findings in respective townships were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in each township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CS
1	72 polling stations in Chanayethazan Township of Mandalay Region,	130,429	141,785	2,166	274	7,494
2	220 polling stations in Kyaukse Township of Mandalay Region,	198,074	183,601	14,028	1,229	19,848
3	135 polling stations in Padaung Township of Mandalay Region,	115,696	117,488	11,827	715	12,372

3. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Chanayethazan and Kyaukse townships of Mandalay Region and Padaung Township of Bago Region together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.
4. According to the inspection, a total of 427 polling stations in these three townships took out 505,101 ballots and used 362,632 ballots. It left 134,587 ballots instead of 142,469 ballots. The difference was 9,231 and it found 1,349 extra ballots. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. Findings were as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each township

Sr	Township	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Chanayethazan	72	149,127	99,332	49,795	44,316	5,686	207
2	Kyaukse	220	224,102	168,712	55,390	53,961	2,501	1,072
3	Padaung	135	131,872	94,588	37,284	36,310	1,044	70
	Total	427	505,101	362,632	142,469	134,587	9,231	1,349

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Chanayethazan Township

5. A total of 72 polling stations in Chanayethazan Township took out 149,127 ballots and distributed 131,950 ballots as ward/village-tract ballots, 3,000 as township advance ballots and 14,177 as township remaining ballots (reserve). The extra/shortage ballots were found and findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village-tract ballots	131,950	98,502	33,448	28,071	5,584	207
2	Township advance ballots	3,000	830	2,170	2,068	102	
3	Township remaining ballots	14,177		14,177	14,177		
	Total	149,127	99,332	49,795	44,316	5,686	207

6. Of 131,950 ward/village-tract ballots of Chanayethazan Township, they used 98,502 ballots and left only 28,071 instead of 33,448. It found 5,584 ballots, and other 207 extra ballots at three polling stations.
7. According to the inspection, of 3,000 township advance ballots, they used 830 ballots and left only 2,068 ballots instead of 2,170 ballots. Therefore, 102 ballots were missing. 14,177 township remaining ballots were found unused.
8. The entire Chanayethazan Township took out 149,127 ballots for Pyithu Hluttaw election and they used 99,332 ballots and it found 44,316 unused ballots.
9. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Kan Kauk	9	14,250	10,453	3,797	3,156	643	2
2	Pyigy Myat Shin	3	8,500	5,868	2,632	2,437	195	
3	Pyigy Myat Hman	3	5,400	4,065	1,335	1,236	99	
4	Patkone Pyaw Bwe	2	4,500	3,380	1,120	1,073	50	3
5	Yan Myo Lon	3	4,900	3,904	996	819	177	
6	Patkone Winn Kyin	2	2,800	2,411	389	443	148	202
7	Mawya Giwa	4	9,250	6,448	2,802	2,125	677	
8	Seiktramahe	3	6,000	4,326	1,674	1,376	298	
9	Harna Zala	4	6,350	4,525	1,825	1,563	262	
10	Chanayethazan (east)	3	6,200	4,154	2,046	1,800	246	
11	Kinsanamahi	4	6,950	5,269	1,681	1,300	381	
12	Chanayethazan (middle)	2	4,300	2,935	1,365	1,269	96	
13	Chanayethazan (west)	1	1,200	928	272	272		
14	Aungnan Yeiktha (east)	4	8,100	6,315	1,785	1,324	461	
15	Aungnan Yeiktha (west)	5	6,850	4,847	2,003	1,471	532	
16	Pyigy Pyaw Bwe (east)	3	4,800	3,715	1,085	887	198	
17	Pyigy Pyaw Bwe (west)	6	12,950	10,399	2,551	2,116	435	
18	Thiri Hayma (east)	2	3,600	2,722	878	778	100	
19	Thiri Hayma (west)	4	6,950	5,581	1,369	1,125	244	
20	Daywun (west)	5	8,100	6,257	1,843	1,501	342	
	Ward/village tract ballots	72	131,950	98,502	33,448	28,071	5,584	207
	Township advance ballots		3,000	830	2,170	2,068	102	
	Township remaining ballots		14,177		14,177	14,177		
	Township Total	72	149,127	99,332	49,795	44,316	5,686	207

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Kyaukse Township

10. According to the inspection, a total of 220 polling stations in 87 village-tracts of 10 Wards in Kyaukse Township of Mandalay Region took out 224,102 ballots and used 168,712. It left 53,961 ballots instead of 55,390. The extra/shortage ballots were found at respective polling stations. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	206,550	168,060	38,490	37,061	2,501	1,072
2	Township advance ballots	17,552	652	16,900	16,900		
Total		224,102	168,712	55,390	53,961	2,501	1,072

11. According to the inspection, it found 2,501 ballots missing and 1,072 extra ballots at 220 polling stations in 87 village-tracts in 10 Wards of Kyaukse Township. They used 652 township advance ballots and saved 16,900 ballots as township remaining ballots.

12. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/village tract	Total Polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact Remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Zay Tan Ward	1	1,000	816	184	184		
2	Phaung Ywa Ward	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
3	Su Gyi Ward	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
4	Pyi Lone Naing Ward	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
5	Min Yat Ward	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
6	Taung Naut Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
7	In Dine Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
8	Thin Taung Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
9	Htan Zin Taw Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
10	Hnget Ka Taung Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
11	Ashae Nge Toe Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
12	Shwe Dar Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
13	Ye Baw Gyi Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
14	Phyauk Seik Pin Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
15	Kalar Kyaung Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
16	Puhto Ni Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
17	Patta Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
18	Pin Ta Le Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
19	Kin Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
20	Han Myintmo Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
21	Pyi Taw Tha Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
22	Shan Taung Oo Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
23	Hmai Pan Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
24	Kalay Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
25	East Thagara Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
26	Thin Gathone Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
27	Taung Taw Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
28	Pone Hnyet Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
29	Le Gyi Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
30	Pauk Pin Kway Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
31	Kyar Kar Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
32	Kha Tat Kone Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
33	Myay So Moe Kaung Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
34	Than Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
35	Pe Khin Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
36	Paung Laung Gyi Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
37	Ywa Thit Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
38	Ye Thayauk Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
39	Chaung Son Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
40	Ye Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
41	Thayet Pin Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
42	Ohn Kyaw Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
43	Zayit Khai Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
44	Kyaung Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
45	Kyet Tha Hin Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
46	Su Kone Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
47	Ye Su Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		

48	Kyet Min Ton Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
49	Aye Mya Kyi Lin Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
50	Baw Ga Wadi Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
51	Let Pan Zin Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
52	Pyi Pan Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
53	Koe Pin Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
54	Shar Pin Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
55	Dwe Hla Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
56	Ngar Su Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
57	Thin Pyo Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
58	Kyee Ait Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
59	Sin Kon Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
60	Pan Khwa Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
61	Kyee Pya Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
62	Kyaung Pan Kone Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
63	Nyaung Shwe Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
64	Nyaung Won Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
65	Put Taine Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
66	Thin Poke Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
67	Ngar Ohe Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
68	Ywa Nan Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
69	Lat Pan Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
70	Zayat Pyu Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
71	Myaung Oo Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
72	Panan Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
73	Kate Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
74	Latpan Pin Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
75	Ta Nge Taw Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
76	Tazoe Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
77	Moke Paung Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
78	Taman Thalin Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
79	Myin Ka Bet Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
80	Ywa Pale Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
81	Myay So Pal Layse Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
82	Anout Thagara Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
83	Bone Kwin Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
84	Dan Tine Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
85	Yan Bet Lo Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
86	Pay Taw Gyi Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
87	Sabe Taw Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
88	Shwe Ain Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
89	Layse Gone Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
90	Sule Gone Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
91	Ain Yaung Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
92	Min Su Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
93	Taw Twin Village tract	1	900	1,015	-115	35		150
94	Kalai Kyaw Village tract	2	2,200	1,890	310	450		140
95	Ye Ma Ayu Village tract	4	4,500	3,591	909	909		
96	Me Ze Pin Village tract	1	1,000	816	184	184		
97	Sai Malan Village tract	2	2,800	2,377	423	423		
Ward/village tract ballots		220	206,550	168,060	38,490	37,061	2,501	1,072
Township Remaining ballots			17,552	652	16,900	16,900		
Township Total		220	224,102	168,712	55,390	53,961	2,501	1,072

SEE PAGE 10

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FROM PAGE-7

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Padaung Township

13. According to the inspection, a total of 135 polling stations in 41 village-tracts of 8 Wards in Padaung Township of Bago Region took out 131,872 ballots and distributed 123,350 ballots as ward/village-tract ballots and 8,522 as township ballots. The extra/shortage ballots were found at respective polling stations. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village tract ballots	123,350	91,940	31,410	30,567	913	70
2	Township ballots	8,522	2,648	5,874	5,743	131	
	Total	131,872	94,588	37,284	36,310	1,044	70

14. Of 123,350 ward/village-tract ballots, the township used 91,940 ballots and it left only 30,567 ballots instead of 31,410. A total of 1,044 ballots were missing at 11 polling stations and it found 70 illegal extra ballots at 18 polling stations.

15. Of 131,872 ballots of the entire township, 94,588 were used and it found 36,310 unused ballots.

16. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/village tract	Total Polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact Remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Kya Khat Ward	1	1,450	1,044	406	406		
2	Min Yat Ward	1	900	680	220	218	2	
3	Yadanapon Ward	4	4,850	3,107	1,743	1,747		4
4	Shwe Pin Ward	2	2,900	2,113	787	787		
5	Pyi Taw Tha Ward	2	2,250	1,598	652	654		2
6	Ywa Tha Yar Village tract	3	2,150	1,289	861	860	1	
7	Shwe Bon Tha Village tract	2	2,200	1,616	584	583	1	
8	Sin Te Village tract	7	8,600	6,105	2,495	2,085	410	
9	Thayet Lain Village tract	4	3,600	2,605	995	999		4
10	Le Village tract	4	3,200	2,441	759	761		2
11	Nyaung Chay Htauk Village tract	4	6,150	4,450	1,700	1,704		4
12	Nyaung Kyo Village tract	1	1,150	792	358	364		6
13	Swal Taw Village tract	1	1,650	1,481	169	170		1
14	Dant Da Lon Village tract	3	2,450	1,603	847	696	151	
15	Ngar Se Pay Village tract	2	1,650	1,279	371	371		
16	Daung Mana Village tract	2	1,850	1,379	471	473		2
17	Yat Tha Village tract	4	2,400	1,799	601	601		
18	Ta lout Pin Village tract	3	2,400	1,870	530	531		1
19	Kaine Gyi Village tract	4	2,150	1,534	616	616		
20	Zayet Hla Village tract	1	1,350	1,060	290	290		
21	Taung Boai Gyi Village tract	2	1,500	1,024	476	476		
22	Kyaung Oo Village tract	3	2,200	1,604	596	600		4
23	Ye Kyaw Village tract	2	1,900	1,392	508	508		
24	Kyee Pin Village tract	2	1,600	1,245	355	355		
25	Nyaung Pin Village tract	2	1,900	1,351	549	549		
26	Shwe Nyi Naung Village tract	1	700	579	121	121		

27	Won Lo Village tract	1	1,300	1,006	294	296		2
28	Si Tha Village tract	1	1,400	1,102	298	298		
29	Phaung Kan Village tract	1	1,050	811	239	239		
30	Taung Bwe Village tract	5	2,600	1,943	657	614	43	
31	Yay Le Kyun Village tract	3	1,650	1,195	455	455		
32	Ma Gyi Hton Village tract	5	3,150	2,325	825	774	51	
33	Thu Ye Tan Village tract	3	2,250	1,527	723	723		
34	Htaik Pauk Village tract	3	1,800	1,506	294	296		2
35	Kyauk Fu Village tract	6	5,350	4,470	880	828	52	
36	Natmauk Village tract	3	2,550	2,033	517	515	2	
37	Pe Gyi Village tract	3	2,200	1,742	458	458		
38	Hlegu Village tract	3	4,450	3,738	712	712		
39	Kyoe Kyar Village tract	3	2,150	1,647	503	503		
40	Kyun Mi Village tract	3	3,350	2,693	657	661		4
41	Hton Bo Village tract	5	5,350	4,171	1,179	1,193		14
42	San Wa Village tract	1	1,000	769	231	231		
43	Myaung Village tract	1	1,200	985	215	217		2
44	Konekalay Village tract	2	1,550	1,183	367	369		2
45	Kwin Hla Village tract	4	4,050	2,922	1,128	1,132		4
46	Htauk Kyant Village tract	3	1,800	1,416	384	384		
47	Ton Kin Village tract	3	1,750	1,474	276	286		10
48	Kyee Taw Village tract	3	2,650	1,806	844	648	196	
49	Phyon Kar Village tract	3	3,650	2,436	1,214	1,210	4	
Ward/village tract total		135	123,350	91,940	31,410	30,567	913	70
Township advance ballots			8,522	2,648	5,874	5,743	131	
Township Total		135	131,872	94,588	37,284	36,310	1,044	70

Union Election Commission

13 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 April, total figure rises to 142,479

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 142,479 after 13 new cases were reported on 2 April 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 131,810 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

One police down, two injured in armed-group attack

ACCORDING to a statement of the Myanmar Police Force, one police officer was down, and two were injured during the attack by an armed group in Homalin Township, Sagaing Region.

The police officers were attacked after they had withdrawn the salaries of the Police Force members from the office of the Homalin Area Police Major around 12:30 pm on 1 April.

An armed group of about 20 people attacked them (one police officer is from the Yaypawmee area police station, Homalin) with small weapons when their car was on the Homalin-Yaypawmee road, near Nanthan village-tract.

Two of the police officers were found with injuries on the abdomen and arms, and one was found with the car being shot dead in the head. Two guns and related ammunition and K3,163,588 were stolen from them, and investigation is underway for the missing ammunition and money.—MNA

Five youths bound for area of ethnic armed organization arrested

ACTING on the tip-off of a dutiful citizen that youths who involved in the riotous protests would attend the course of explosion in connection with an ethnic armed organization, security forces take special security measures in respective areas.

In so doing, security forces inspected a Toyota Vios with number plate 4P/7429 driven from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon by U Soe Moe, son of U San Htay of Meiktila, at the corner of Yangon-Mandalay Highway and Inwa Bank road in Toungoo at about 12:30 pm on 31 March. They arrested Daw Shwe Zin Aye, 38, daughter of U San Shwe, from Meiktila and U Tayar Soe, 21, son of U Soe Min from Meiktila, from the vehicle.

The security forces also inspected KIA Picanto with number plate 6Q/2462 driven by U Zaw Zaw, son of U Kyin Thauang from Myingyan in front of Pawtawmu Pagoda on Yangon-Mandalay Highway at about 12:40 pm. They found his wife Daw Theint Thanda Hnin, 38, daughter of U Myo Thet, aboard the vehicle together



Soe Moe, 38 year old.



Shwe Zin Aye, 38 year old.



Tayar Soe, 21 year old.



Zaw Zaw, 39 year old.



Theint Thanda Hnin, 38 year old.

with two laptops and other accessories. After investigating them, they were arrested in time to go to areas of the ethnic armed organization to attend the military training course.

They confessed that they led the riotous protests, provided shields and spears to be used in attacking security forces to rioters, collected cash donation to be provided to for-

mer personnel who joined the CDM movements, exploded the explosives on test and committed social punishment against teachers who did not join the CDM. They contacted U Htet Aung, 52, old 88 generation student (his father name and address are under scrutiny), and U Myint Soe, whose rank from an ethnic armed organization is under scrutiny.

Preparations are being made to take action against them under Section 505 (b) in the case of State sedition. Efforts are being made to arrest a chain of suspects U Htet Aung and U Myint Soe, as quickly as possible. — MNA

Rioters accelerate terrorist acts across country



Pieces of handmade mine seen after attack on security forces.

ACCORDING to a statement from the Myanmar Police Force, the rioters have accelerated acts of sabotage in accordance with the methods used by the terrorist groups, across the country.

Yesterday, they destroyed state-owned buildings, railways, bridges, public transformers, vehicles used by security forces with handmade grenades and mines in some townships in regions/states.

On 1 April, two men riding a motorbike arrived at the Anti-Human Trafficking Police Unit in Kanpya ward in Myeik town at

7:50 pm and threw a fire bottle on the roof of the building. However, the fire was extinguished and no one was injured.

On 2 April, a handmade grenade was exploded on the left side of the Shan State Hluttaw around 4:40 am. The blast caused three small holes in the wall of the Hluttaw fence.

On the same day, one handmade mine transformed as a time-bomb was found in two suspicious bags near the fence of the Department of Road Transport on Thanthumar road in Thingangyun Township at 8:50

am. Similarly, military engineers had to clear the handmade mine set up at No (62) bridge on the railway between Bago Station and Shwe Hlae Station, Bago Township.

Moreover, there were bomb explosions in Lewe Township, Mawlamyine Township, and Lashio Township but no one was injured.

Security forces are investigating to take action against the perpetrators of the vandalism in accordance with the law, according to the statement of the Myanmar Police Force.—MNA



Pieces of handmade grenades and mines after attack on security forces.



Military engineers are clearing the handmade mine.

Farmers from Kyaukse grow okra for extra family income

THE farmers in Tadalae ward, Kyaukse town, Mandalay region are growing okra on a manageable scale to earn family extra income daily.

"I have four acres of farmland. We could not grow the paddy because those farmlands are sandy soil and are located next to the Zaw Gyi river. I have six family members, and I need to use the farmlands effectively to have family income. Now, I have cultivated seasonal crops such as okra, dregia volubilis, eggplant, rosselle, radish and safflower. But, I have cultivated okra for one acre. We don't have to spend the labour charges because family members help grow those seasonal crops. However, the cultivation of the seasonal crops cost over K100,000. Okra takes over 60 days in total from cultivating to harvest, both in the dry season and in winter. We harvest every two days at first, and then, as more plants mature, we harvest every day. About 12 visisses of okra have yielded on the first harvest. As there is abundant yield, we have got about 60



Consuming okra can help people fight against cancer and reduce stress and cure kidney and liver diseases and diabetes.

visisses. We are selling our okra in both retail and wholesale. The wholesale price of okra is K600 per visis. The okra crop provides extra money to contribute to their family's needs," said U Aung Thin, an okra grower from Tadalae ward.

Okra is a water-loving plant that needs watering to keep the soil moist. The okra seeds are planted two feet apart. The nursery plant needs to be weeded and given fertilizer to grow the plants well. The plant needs to

be sprayed with the pesticide if it is necessary.

Okra or commonly known as lady's finger, is a widely consumed vegetable. It can be fried, pickled or grilled. This green veggie is filled with phenol and flavonoid. Consuming okra can help people fight against cancer and reduce stress and cure kidney and liver diseases and diabetes. People with a high blood glucose level should definitely include okra in their daily diets. — Thet Maung (Kyaukse)/GNLM

Forex market rate of USD against MMK higher over K80 than CBM

ACCORDING to the domestic exchange market, the US dollar's foreign exchange market rate against Myanmar kyat is over K80 higher than that of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM).

Although the dollar exchange rate hit only K1,469 per dollar on 31 March as stated by the CBM, the outside exchange rate is set at K1,550 per dollar as per the money changer sale listings.

Though the dollar exchange rate stood at around K1,330 per dollar at the local market at the end of January, the rate jumped to over K1,400 per dollar in the first week of February.

Consequently, the CBM sold US\$6.8 million on 3 February at a foreign currency auction system to stabilize the exchange rate. Since the start of the year, the bank has been purchasing and selling the US dollar in the auction market to control the rise and fall of the exchange rate.

In the domestic market in 2021, the highest and lowest exchange rate is currently fixed around K1,327-1,345 in January and K1,335-1,465 in February.

In 2020, the exchange rate moved in the range of K1,465-1,493 in January, K1,436-1,465 in February, K1,320-1,445 in March, K1,395-1,440 in April, K1,406-1,426 in May, K1,385-1,412 in June, K1,367-1,410 in July, K1,335-1,390 in August, K1,310-1,355 in September, K1,282-1,315 in October, K1,303-1,330 in November and K1,324-1,403 in December.

In the last six months in 2019, the rates were fixed at K1,508-1,517 in July, K1,510-1,526 in August, K1,527-1,565 in September, K1,528-1,537 in October, K1,510-1,524 in November and K1,485-1,513 in December.

On 20 September 2018, the dollar exchange rate hit a record high of K1,650 in the local exchange market. — NN/GNLM

Domestic gold price rises to around K1.4 mln on global trend

ACCORDING to the domestic gold market, the domestic gold prices rose to K1.4 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.0016 kilograms) with the climbing of international gold price, according to the domestic gold market. The international gold price was around US\$1,683 per ounce at the end-March but sharply jumped to \$1,730 on 2 April. The gold price rose by \$47 in two days. With the climbing of international gold price, the gold price in Myanmar has also skipped to 1,393,000 per tical on 2 April from K1,275,000 per tical on 31 March, with a significant rise to K18,000 per tical in two days. However, the rate has not touched the maximum of over K1,410,000 per tical registered in February, according to the gold traders.

In January 2021, the domestic gold fetched the highest price of K1,336,000 per tical on 6 January. It reached the lowest price of K1,316,000 per tical on 28 January. It reached the lowest level of K1,340,000 (2 February) and the highest level of K1,410,000 (3 February). In March, the rate fluctuated between the most elevated of K1,391,000 (25 March) and the lowest of K1,302,000 (4 March), the gold traders said. The local gold price reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,312,000 (16 November) and the lowest of K1,278,000 (28 November). In December, the pure yellow metal priced moved in the range of K1,275,000 (1 December) and K1,333,000 (28 December), according to the gold traders.

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs last year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over K1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching an all-time record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September in 2019. — NN/GNLM

Tamu border still requested to close

THE Tamu town border area in the Sagaing region between Myanmar and India is still requested to close, said U Kyaw Win Oo, the Tamu District administrator.

"We have submitted a request to the divisional level authorities to close the borders in the area between Myanmar and India at the end of March. But, we haven't got any information yet. We have also requested that if the authorities open the borders for some reasons, they should open the crossings only to load the cargos," he said.

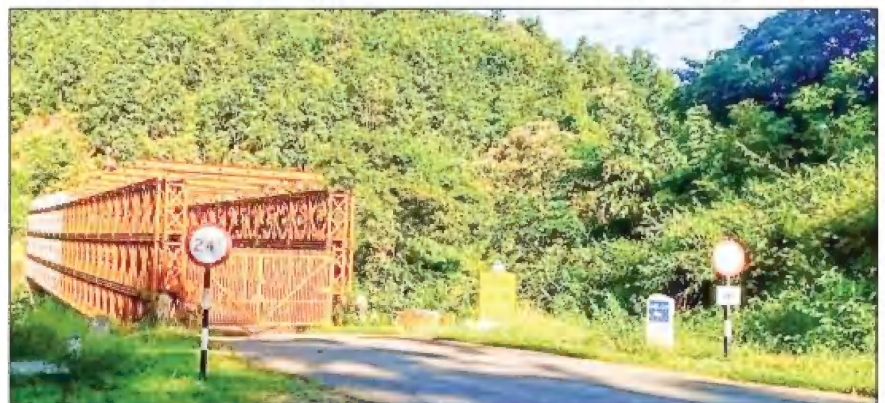
Myanmar mainly exports to

India foodstuffs, personal goods, kitchenware, fruits and vegetables, beans, onion, garlic and areca nuts through the Tamu border route while importing from India foodstuff, clothes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials.

Myanmar government has closed the bilateral border crossing between Myanmar and India in Tamu town from 14 to the end-March. Now, we have requested divisional level authorities to close the border checkpoint again.

Nearly 60 per cent of the local residents from Tamu town depend upon the border for their livelihood. According to the locals, the Myanmar-India border crossings have hampered the flow of trade for the residents.

There are two Myanmar-India border crossings in Tamu township No 1 checkpoint and No 2 checkpoint. Border trade between Myanmar and India hit US\$145 million as of 19 March in the current financial year 2020-21 ending September, said a statistical report of Myanmar's Commerce Ministry. — Lulay/GNLM



There are two Myanmar-India border crossings in Tamu township No 1 checkpoint and No 2 checkpoint.

As air travel picks up, United says it is hiring pilots

UNITED Airlines announced Thursday it will immediately start hiring pilots, beginning with a group of 300, to be ready to meet growing demand for air travel.

"With vaccination rates increasing and travel demand trending upwards, I'm excited to share that United will resume the pilot hiring process that was halted last year," Bryan Quigley, the airline's chief of flight operations, said in a memo to employees obtained by AFP.

The first offers will go to pilots who had condition-

al job offers or were in line for jobs last year, he said.

However, "the number of new pilots needed will be dependent on our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic," trying to assuage concerns of current pilots who have weathered the pandemic disruptions. Airlines were forced to take drastic measures to cut costs since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic caused travel to come to a screeching halt, including encouraging tens of thousands of employees to retire or leave the company, or take unpaid leave.—AFP ■

Asian markets rally after Wall St record

TOKYO'S Nikkei led a rally in holiday-thinned trade in Asia on Friday following a record-breaking day on Wall Street with investors buoyed by Joe Biden's huge new infrastructure spending plan and growing optimism over the economic recovery.

With most equity and commodity markets in the region closed for Easter, business was light but the mood remained decidedly upbeat ahead of the release of key US jobs data that is expected to confirm that the world's top economy is getting back on its feet.

Confidence that global growth will soar as vaccines allow economies to open has for now overtaken worries that the re-



The rollout of vaccines has raised hopes that economies can begin to reopen and allow people to get back to a semblance of pre-pandemic life. PHOTO: AFP

bound will fan inflation and force central banks to wind back their market-boosting monetary policies.

"Before you worry about inflation, there's reflation and I think that's

the main theme in the market," Ed Campbell, at QMA, said.

Biden's \$2.25 trillion rebuilding package -- coming soon after the passage of his \$1.9 trillion stimulus

-- has reinforced the view among investors that the US economy will run hot, with analysts saying its corporate tax implications were also being put aside for now.—AFP ■

Automakers report higher US sales, but chip shortage clouds outlook



GM reported higher US sales in the first quarter, but inventories dwindled amid the industrywide semiconductor shortage. PHOTO: AFP

CARMAKERS reported sales on Thursday amid higher first-quarter US rising consumer confi-

dence, but a semiconductor shortage that has crimped production raises questions about supply in coming months.

Toyota led the pack with its double-digit, year-over-year US sales gain, but General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler also saw sales rise during a period that included passage of a giant US economic relief package that sent cash to most households and accelerating vaccinations.

"Consumer confi-

dence and spending will continue to increase due to stimulus, rising vaccination rates and the progressive reopening of the economy," said GM Chief Economist Elaine Buckberg. "Auto demand should remain strong throughout the year." But while demand is healthy, there are questions about the supply picture as all four companies have announced production cuts due to the global semiconductor shortage.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tokyo stocks rise in morning on U.S. economic recovery hopes

TOKYO stocks gained Friday morning as optimism about a U.S. economic recovery increased following strong U.S. factory data for March and President Joe Biden's \$2 trillion plan to rebuild infrastructure.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average rose 331.75 points, or 1.13 per cent, from Thursday to 29,720.62. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange was up 11.12 points, or 0.57 per cent, at 1,968.76.

Gainers were led by electric appliance, mining, and information and communication issues. — Kyodo News ■

S&P 500 ends over 4,000 for 1st time, oil prices rally

THE S&P 500 finished above 4,000 for the first time Thursday setting a record amid rising confidence in the US economic recovery, while oil prices rallied after petroleum producers agreed to limited output increases.

The heady session marked a strong start to the second quarter a day after President Joe Biden formally announced a massive \$2 trillion infrastructure plan which he said would create millions of good jobs.

Biden's proposal faces hurdles on Capitol Hill, but investors remain bullish about the coming months in the wake of the giant fiscal stimulus package approved in mid-March, and the accelerating coronavirus vaccine campaign in the United States. Expectations of a strong corporate earnings season later this month are prompting investors to make fresh bets on stocks, analysts said.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (103S/105N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (103S/105N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/TMT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (220N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (220N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **4-4-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING

World powers, Iran to discuss US return to nuclear deal



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (R) and Iran's Atomic Energy Organization chief Ali Akbar Salehi (2nd from R) listening to a technician in the control room of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in the Gulf port city of Bushehr. **PHOTO: AFP**

WORLD powers and Iran will meet by videoconference Friday to discuss the possible return of the United States to the Iran nuclear deal, in a development welcomed by Washington.

Representatives of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and Iran — the countries still party to the agreement after the US left — will attend Friday's meeting, according to an EU statement.

"Participants will discuss the prospect of a possible re-

turn of the United States to the JCPOA, and how to ensure the full and effective implementation of the agreement by all sides," the statement said, referring to the deal by its initials.

US State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters that "we obviously welcome this as a positive step".

"We are ready to pursue a return to compliance with our JCPOA commitments consistent with Iran also doing the same," Price said Thursday.

The US is speaking to partners "about the best way to achieve this, including through a series of initial mutual steps," he said.

"We've been looking at options for doing so, including with indirect conversations through our European partners," Price added.

Friday will mark the first meeting of the so-called "joint commission" on the Iran nuclear accord since US President Joe Biden took office. —AFP ■

Dutch PM Rutte clings on after political battle

DUTCH Prime Minister Mark Rutte survived one of the biggest political fights of his decade in power Friday, narrowly winning a no-confidence vote over claims he lied about coalition talks.

Dubbed the "Teflon premier" for his ability to dodge scandal, Rutte will however remain under pressure after every party except his own supported a separate motion in parliament condemning his behaviour.

Rutte, whose VVD party won the most seats in elections last month based on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, was accused of covering up efforts to rein in an outspoken MP during coalition negotiations.

"I will continue as prime minister, I will work terribly hard to regain trust," Rutte told parliament after the no-confidence vote.

He was supported by the two main parties that formed part of his previous coalition,

the centre-left D66 and centre-right Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), while all opposition parties voted against him.

Rutte is one of Europe's longest-serving leaders after German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Hungarian premier Viktor Orban, and will become the Netherlands' longest-serving PM if he is still in power at the end of 2022. Coalition talks were already expected to take until the early summer but may now drag on even longer.

'Shamelessly lied'

The row erupted last week when coalition talks were halted after one negotiator rushed out of parliament after learning she had tested positive for Covid-19, and the notes she was carrying were snapped by a photographer.

The name of CDA lawmaker Pieter Omtzigt's name appeared in the notes with the words "position elsewhere" — widely seen as meaning that he should be given a ministerial post to keep him quiet. —AFP ■



Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ukraine says Russia massing troops on border, US warns Moscow

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday accused Moscow of building up troops on his country's border as the United States warned Russia against "intimidating" Ukraine.

Kiev has been locked in a conflict with Russian-backed separatists since 2014, and this week Ukrainian officials reported Russian troop movement in annexed Crimea and on the border, near territories controlled by Moscow-backed separatists.

On Thursday, Zelensky's ministers discussed the escalating security situation with Western allies including US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin.

"Muscle-flexing in the form of military exercises and possible provocations along the border are traditional Russian games," Zelensky said in a statement.

He accused Moscow of



Ukraine has been locked in a conflict with Russian-backed separatists since 2014. **PHOTO: AFP**

seeking to create "a threatening atmosphere" as Kiev hopes to resume a ceasefire brokered last year.

The US State Department said it was "absolutely concerned by recent escalations of Russian aggressive and provoca-

tive actions in eastern Ukraine".

"What we would object to are aggressive actions that have an intent of intimidating, of threatening, our partner Ukraine," State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters. —AFP ■

Shadow of murderous brothers hangs over Libyan town

"THEY spared no child, no woman, no old man," said Mohamed Amer, mourning those murdered during a reign of terror by six brothers who ruled a Libyan town with bloodshed.

"I am the father of the martyr Moaid, killed in cold blood by the criminal gang of Kaniyat," said Amer, a silver-haired father in his fifties.

The Kaniyat were a gang of six brothers who commanded a militia that traumatised the town of Tarhuna in war-ravaged Libya, systematically executing not only their opponents but slaughtering their entire families.

Those they did not kill they cowed into submission.

The brothers paraded through the town in shows of force — with a pair of leashed lions roaring at the crowd.

Libya has been ravaged by conflict since the fall and killing of veteran dictator Moamer Kadhafi in a NATO-backed 2011 revolt, and an array of armed groups and militia forces arose to fill the vacuum.

In Tarhuna, it was the Al-Kani militia, also known as the Kaniyat, who took power in 2015.

Hundreds missing

Now the brothers are gone, toppled from power last year, but their shadow still hangs over the town.

After their ousting, digging began to exhume the corpses of the people they butchered. Multiple mass graves have been unearthed in the farming town some 80 kilometres (50 miles) southeast of the capital Tripoli. Some bodies were found blindfolded with their wrists tied.

Amer, like many of the dusty town's residents, prays for the latest bodies dug up. —AFP ■

Dozens feared dead, 72 still trapped in Chinese Taipei railway crash

DOZENS of people are feared dead after a packed train derailed inside a tunnel in eastern Chinese Taipei on Friday at the start of a long holiday weekend, with rescuers still scrambling to reach others trapped inside.

President Tsai Ing-wen's office said she had ordered hospitals to prepare for a mass casualty event.

"The top priority now is to rescue the stranded people," it said in a statement.

The accident occurred on Chinese Taipei's eastern railway line around 9.30am (01.30 GMT) near the coastal city of Hualien.

Pictures published by local news website UDN showed the front of the train inside the tunnel had been pulverized into a twisted mesh of metal.

Railway police said 36 pas-

sengers were classified as "out of hospital cardiac arrest" - a term for someone showing no signs of life.

A further 72 people were still believed to be trapped inside train carriages while 61 passengers had been sent to hospital.

The Central Emergency Operation Center gave a slightly lower suspected death toll of 26 people showing "no signs of life".

Another live broadcast by UDN outside the tunnel showed at least two undamaged train carriages with rescuers helping passengers escape.

"It felt like there was a sudden violent jolt and I found myself falling to the floor," an unidentified female survivor told the network.

"We broke the window to climb to the roof of the train to get out."



People walk next to the train which derailed in a tunnel north of Hualien in Chinese Taipei on Friday morning. Dozens of passengers were feared killed. PHOTO:AFP

Construction vehicle

The eight-car train was making its way from Taipei to the southeastern city of Taitung

and was carrying some 350 passengers.

Local media said the accident was believed to have been

caused by a construction vehicle sliding down an embankment and striking the train as it passed into the tunnel. —AFP ■

Australia's Brisbane lifts snap virus lockdown ahead of Easter



Brisbane's three-day lockdown was ordered Monday, forcing schools, restaurants and bars to close after an outbreak in the city. PHOTO: AFP

STAY-AT-HOME orders for more than two million people in Australia's third-biggest city Brisbane were lifted Thursday, ending a snap coronavirus lockdown just ahead of the traditionally busy Easter holidays.

The three-day lockdown ordered Monday saw schools, restaurants and bars forced to close after an outbreak in Brisbane, with health officials saying it was necessary to stop the virus spreading and bolster contact tracing. It was the latest in a series of mini lockdowns in Australian cities this year, which authorities say have quickly brought virus outbreaks under control and avoided more onerous measures.

Just one new case was de-

tected in Brisbane on Thursday, taking the number of cases to 14, allowing restrictions to be eased.

Masks will be mandatory in public spaces while restrictions on gatherings and dancing will also remain in place.

"We're not out of the woods yet so... for the next two weeks if we all do the right thing, we can get through this together," state Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said.

The news was expected to provide relief for the beleaguered tourism sector in Queensland - known as Australia's "Sunshine State" for its inviting weather - with the popular destination now fully open to visitors just ahead of Easter holidays beginning Friday. —AFP ■

Facebook virus lies 'biggest challenge' to PNG vaccine drive: minister

PAPUA New Guinea's health minister on Thursday called disinformation spread on Facebook the "biggest challenge" to efforts to curb the rampant spread of Covid-19 in the poor Pacific nation.

Jelta Wong said "dangerous" posts and anti-vax conspiracy theories were hampering the drive to get people to seek treatment and testing for the disease as infection numbers soar.

"When Facebook hit Papua New Guinea everybody became an expert," Wong told an online event organized by Sydney's Lowy Institute think tank.

"Everybody had a PhD, even sitting under a coconut tree they became a PhD," he said in describing the spread of faulty information about coronavirus by users of the platform.

PNG, a poor nation of more than eight million off Australia's northeast coast, reported around 1,000 Covid-19 cases in the first year of the pandemic, but saw more than 5,000 new infections last month alone.

Wong said that low rates of testing meant the real scale of the outbreak

was likely much larger.

The country's health care system is creaking under the strain, with many workers themselves infected and authorities in the capital, Port Moresby, forced to set up a makeshift Covid-19 clinic in a sports stadium earlier this week.

Australia flew an emergency batch of 8,000 doses of vaccine into Port Moresby last week along with a small team of public health specialists to help inoculate frontline health

workers ahead of a larger roll-out.

About 40 per cent of the 1,600 staff at the Port Moresby General Hospital have agreed to be vaccinated, according to health officials, while doses will also be sent to hotspots including Lae, Goroka and Vanimo. But beyond securing vaccines, Wong said a major hurdle is convincing people to get the jab in a country where adult vaccination programmes are rare and virus misinformation is rife. —AFP ■



A sports stadium in Port Moresby is being used as a makeshift Covid-19 clinic. PHOTO: AFP

AFC selects best Asian forward players for 2021

THE Asian Football Confederation has selected 13 Asian star strikers for this year, according to the statement with the AFC. AFC officials made a list of the players along with their professional portfolios.

The first striker name the AFC select-

ed is 27-year-old player Hammadi Ahmed of Iraq. He is currently playing for Air Force Club and already scored 27 goals in the AFC Cup tourney and has achieved the top scorer award in the AFC in 2016.

The second striker is Bienvenido Mar-

anon from Spain, who is currently playing for Ceres-Negros FC and has scored 35 AFC Cup goals. He was honoured as an AFC Cup top scorer in 2019.

Next, the third is Ali Ashfaq from the Maldives and has scored 29 AFC Cup goals, and the fourth

is Aleksandar Duric from Singapore and has scored 32 AFC goals. Mohamad Ghaddar from Lebanon is also famous for winning the top scorer award in 2007, and he has scored 26 AFC Cup goals. Meanwhile, Indian player Sunil Chhetri from Bengaluru FC has scored 18 AFC

Cup goals. Mahmoud Shelbaei from Jordan has scored 34 AFC Cup goals and runs for Asia's best players list.

Other famous star forward players of Asia are 32 AFC Cup goals scorer Amjad Radhi of Iraq, 30 AFC Cup goals scorer Rico of Brazil, 27

AFC Cup goals scorer Issam Jemba of Tunisia, 23 goals scorer Abdelhadi Al Maharmeh of Jordan, 19 goals scorer Raja Rafe of Syria and 12 goals scorer of the AFC Cup, Manuchehr Dzhalilov of Tajikistan respectively, according to the AFC. —GNLM ■

Battle for Premier League top four heats up



Everton have not qualified for the Champions League since 2005. PHOTO: AFP

MANCHESTER City already have one hand on the Premier League trophy but the battle for the top four is likely to go down to the wire as a clutch of clubs seek to join Europe's elite next season.

AFP Sport takes a look at the contenders as the 2020/21 campaign en-

ters its final stretch, with nine games remaining for most teams.

The favourites

Manchester City, Manchester United, Leicester and Chelsea currently occupy the top four places in the English top-flight.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's United are eight

points clear of fifth-placed West Ham and are on track to finish in the top two for only the second time since they were last champions in 2013.

United's run-in does not appear too tricky, although they still have to travel to Tottenham and host Liverpool. They also play top-four rivals

Leicester at Old Trafford.

Leicester came agonisingly close to qualifying for the Champions League for only the second time in their history last season but missed out on the final day, beaten by United.

Brendan Rodgers' side, who last month beat United in the FA Cup quarter-finals, look more robust this year and are just one point behind the Red Devils. Leicester face Manchester City this weekend before a run of kinder fixtures, but they will be keen to maintain a buffer, with a difficult set of matches to end the season — against United, Chelsea and Spurs.

Chelsea, still unbeaten in all competitions since Thomas Tuchel took over from Frank Lampard in January, are in fourth spot but have less margin for error and are also still involved in the FA Cup and Champions League. —AFP ■

Senegal's wrestlers ready for combat after yearlong wait

TEN burly Senegalese wrestlers raise a chant, singing "Mother, pray for us," while jogging up and down a sandy field by the Atlantic Ocean.

Training has resumed after a year of coronavirus-related restrictions that had stopped them from practising their sport.

Wrestling in the West African nation is a centuries-old tradition rooted in harvest festivals, and draws a fanatical following.

Hulking fighters dressed in loincloths face off in packed stadiums, performing mystic rituals in the sand before going toe-to-toe.

On Sunday, the first major bout since the start of the pandemic will take place in a 20,000-seater stadium just outside of Dakar. "This fight is of huge importance to me," says Eumeu Sene, 42, one of the men training in the suburb of the capital Dakar. —AFP ■



Training has resumed after a year of coronavirus-related restrictions. PHOTO: AFP

Ibrahimovic, Lukaku fines for spat go to charity



Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Romelu Lukaku's fines for squaring off in a row during an Italian Cup match will be donated to charity, their rival Milan clubs said on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

ZLATAN Ibrahimovic and Romelu Lukaku's fines for squaring off in a row during an Italian Cup match will be donated to charity, their rival Milan clubs said on Thursday.

AC Milan striker Ibrahimovic went head-to-head with his Inter counterpart during the Cup quarter-final in the San Siro on January 26.

The former Manchester United team-mates traded insults and were both charged with unsportsmanlike conduct.

In a joint statement the clubs said the incident was "not in keeping with the shared principles of sporting fair play" and pledged the sum which has yet to be decided in a plea deal with the Italian Football

Federation would go to charity.

The heated altercation began at the half-time whistle in the San Siro.

Ibrahimovic taunted Lukaku and infuriated the Belgian by laughing in his face before the pair went head-to-head.

They continued to trade insults as they headed towards the tunnel with a furious Lukaku being restrained by his teammates.

Both players were booked over the incident and Ibrahimovic was subsequently sent off after picking up a second yellow card for another incident.

Both scored in the game which Inter won 2-1. —AFP ■